

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-5, 10, and 11 are presently active in this case, Claims 1 and 10 having been amended and Claims 6-9, 12, and 13 having been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer by way of the present Amendment.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claims 1-5, 10, and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, the recitation of "the component" in Claims 1 and 10 was indicated as having no clear antecedent basis. Claims 1 and 10 were amended to change "the component" to "a component," thereby resolving the antecedent basis issue. By way of illustration and not limitation, the specification describes an embodiment in which the component is described as an element of the developing fluid such as alkali, pure water, or other substances. (See, e.g., page 30, line 32, through page 31, line 24.) Accordingly, the Applicants request the withdrawal of the indefiniteness rejection.

The statements made in item 3 on pages 2-3 of the Official Action suggest that the claims of the present application recite "the step or means for calculating an alkali concentration based on measured photoresist concentration for uniform development" and "adjusting the alkali concentration for different photoresist concentrations to maintain uniform development." The Applicants note that independent Claims 1 and 10 do not recite this specific language, and therefore are not accurately reflected by this language.

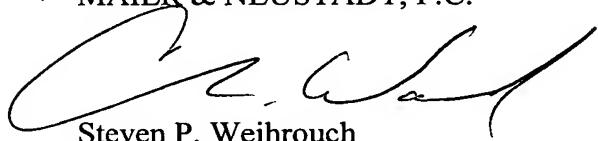
Application Serial No.: 10/706,091  
Reply to Office Action dated April 1, 2005

Independent Claims 1 and 10 are only limited to the language expressly recited in Claims 1 and 10 as noted in the above section under the heading "IN THE CLAIMS."

Consequently, in view of the above discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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